ABSTRACT

A common problem faced by speech dialog systems is that they have to serve users with varying degrees of experience of such a system in an optimal manner. The invention relates to a speech dialog system that differentiates between inexperienced and experienced users and generates speech prompts that are adapted accordingly. The system is able to differentiate between inexperienced and experienced users, issuing a detailed speech prompt to the former and an abbreviated speech prompt to the latter. According to the invention, the speech dialog system initialises a dialog step using an abbreviated speech prompt. If the system user does not react to the abbreviated speech prompt after a specified time (recognition timeout), a detailed speech prompt is issued. Thus both types of speech prompts are issued for each dialog step and are available to the system user for selection. The user can therefore always select the type and manner of dialog he or she requires. The experienced user therefore always has the option of taking the initiative with regard to the course of the dialog. If at one point in the speech dialog he or she is unsure of the type of speech response that is expected by the speech dialog system, he or she can simply wait for the recognition timeout and then receive a detailed speech prompt.